



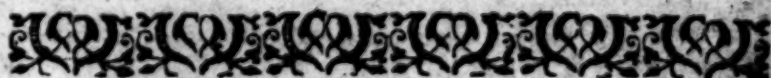
JETHRO's Advice

Recommended to the

Inhabitants of Boston,

IN

Chusing Town-Officers.



FOR THE COLLECTION

YETHRO'S Advice

Recommended to the

Indubious of Boston



Chung Town-Officers.

FOR THE COLLECTION

Jethro's Advice
Recommended to the
INHABITANTS of *Boston*,
IN
NEW-ENGLAND,
Viz.
To Chuse Well-qualified Men,
AND
Haters of Covetousness,
FOR
Town Officers.

In a LECTURE on *Exodus XVIII. 21.*
9th. 1st. Month. 1709-10.

By *Thomas Bridge,*

Pastor of a Church in *Boston.*

The Second Edition.

Luke 12. 15. Take heed, and beware of Covetousness.

B O S T O N: Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND
and T. GREEN, at the Printing-House in Queen-street.
M, DCC, XXXIII.

Fisher's Advice

Recommended to the

INHABITANTS of Boston

IN

NEW-ENGLAND

AND

To Choose Well-qualified Men

AND

Holders of Certificates

Town Officers



in a LECTURE on Tuesday XVIII. 21.
Sept. 18. 1793.

By Thomas Fisher

Pastor of a Church in Boston

Printed by S. Kneass


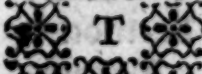

Take it as a Rule, and a Guide of Certificates

BRO. S. P. O. W. Printed and Sold by S. Kneass and
T. G. W. at the Boston Book Store
M. DCC. LXXXIII.

P R E F A C E



P R E F A C E

 Attempt the Character of the
 Rev. Author of the ensuing
 Sermon, would be vain and
needless. His great Worth
and singular Abilities ; His
Piety, Prudence, Courage, Catholic Spirit,
and other eminent Vertues, are remembered
with a just veneration, by many Persons
now living ; and his Name will ever have
an honourable mention in the Churches of
New-England. — In particular, his
excellent Talent *to speak a word in Season*,
is demonstrated in the subsequent *Discourse*,
wherein he has drawn the Pourtrature of
the *Covetous Man*, with great Judgment, and
in strong and lively Colours : And also
entered a solemn *Caveat* against the Election
of *Such*, to Places of *Trust* and Power ;
inasmuch

P R E F A C E.

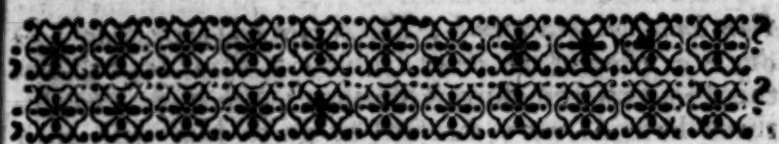
inasmuch as Men of *Sordid, Mercenary, and Contracted Spirits*, are not only unserviceable to the Public, but in exalted Stations, are forever *baneful* to Human Society.

These being Truths at all times of just concern and importance to the Public, it is not doubted that the Inhabitants of *Boston*, inspir'd with a sense hereof, will, at their Anniversary Elections, both in *March* and *May*, be careful to manifest a zealous regard to the Interest and Safety of the Town. — That so good and worthy an End may be promoted, This Sermon is now Re-printed, and heartily Recommended.

Boston, Feb. 22.

1732, 3.





The Time for Chusing *Town-Officers* drawing near, I shall express my regard to the good of the *Town*, by a brief Discourse on that Advice of *JETHRO*, viz.

EXODUS 18. 21.

Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the People, Able men, such as fear God, men of Truth, Hating Covetousness; and place such over them, to be Rulers of Thousands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Rulers of Fifties, and Rulers of Tens.

WE read, *Exod. 2. 18.* That *Moses* fled from *Pharaoh* into the Land of *Midian*, and Married *Zipporah* Daughter of *Jethro*, the Priest or Prince of *Midian*. The reason why he is thus stiled, I conceive may be gathered, by considering the Character that is given of *Job*. *Job* is supposed to be descended from *Abraham*, and that he lived in the time between *Abraham* and *Moses*; he was the Greatest Man of the East, not only as to Riches and Estate, but also in Majesty, and Authority; For, When he went out to the Gate through the City, when he prepared his Seat in the Street. The Young men saw him, and hid themselves, and the Aged rose, and stood up. The Princes refrained talking, and laid themselves down.

their hands on their mouth ; The Nobles told their peace ; he dwelt as King in the Army. Job 29 7, 8, 9, 10, 25. Yet this Prince offered Burnt-Offerings ; Job. 1. 5. Yea, his three Friends were directed to go to him with their Burnt-offering, and he was to Pray for them, which he did, and the Lord accepted him, Job 42. 8, 9, 10. 'Being thus consecrated by God, he might be stiled Priest or Prince.

Jethro was descended from Midian, the fourth Son of Abraham, by his Wife Keturah, Gen. 25. 2. and was Priest, or Prince of Midian.

Mile'izedeck King of Salem, was Priest of the Most High God. Jethro owned, and worshipped the True God, Exod. 18. 12.

Moses by express Command from God, departed from Midian to go into Egypt, taking his Wife and two Sons with him. Exod. 4. 20. But after God manifested his displeasure against him, for neglecting to Circumcise his Son ; he sent his Wife and Children back unto Jethro, who remained with him until the happy Congress mentioned in this Chapter.

It is conceived that this part of the History is transposed ; because it appears that this meeting was after the giving of the Law : when Moses sat as Judge ; both to explain the Mind and Will of God to the People, and to determine matters in Controversy according to the Law. That it should therefore in point of time have been mentioned after the 10th verse of the 10th of Numbers.

Jethro had in his own Land, a general account of the wonderful deliverance God had granted his People Israel, from the Land of Egypt, under the Conduct of his Son-in-law Moses ; and therefore moves towards him, with his Wife and Children ; Moses went out to meet him ; and after the joyful Congratulation, and they were come into the Tent, Moses gives him a more particular account of the merciful and wonderful dispensations of Divine Providence towards Israel, since he left him in Midian.

This

This filled the heart of the Good old Man with joy, which he expressed, by acknowledging the transcendent Glory, and excellency of the God of Israel; by offering of Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, and feasting with Aaron, and the Elders of Israel before God, *Exod. 18. 12.* so joyning with the Church of Israel, in the Solemn Worship of God.

The day following, *Moses* sat to Judge the People, who stood before him from morning to evening; which his wife Father-in-law observing, testified his dislike of, as a method that would be very prejudicial both to himself, and also to the People: to prevent the inconvenience, he proposeth an expedient; yet, as a good; as well as a wise man, submits to the determination of God himself, *v. 23.* *If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall go to their place in peace.* His advice was to provide out of all the People, a certain number of Officers, who might bear the burthen with *Moses*.

Moses was sensible of the necessity of complying with this advice, and acknowledged before the Congregation, that he was not able by himself alone, to bear their cumbrance, their burthen and their strife. *Deut. 1. 12.* The People therefore, having by his direction, Chosen a sufficient number of Persons for divers Offices; *Moses* made them Heads over Israel in several Districts, with a most solemn Charge; saying to them, *Hear the Causes between your Brethren, and judge righteously between every man, and his brother, and the Stranger that is with him; ye shall not respect persons in judgment, but you shall hear the small, as well as the great; you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's; and the Cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.* *Deut. 1. 16, 17.*

The Divine Approbation of this advice, is manifest by that standing Law, *Deut. 16. 18.* *Judges and Officers shalt thou make thee in all thy Gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy Tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment, thou shalt not wrest judgment, thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift;*

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doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the Righteous; that which is altogether just (Justice, Justice) shalt thou follow.

Accordingly that great Reformer, King Jehoshaphat set Judges in the Land, throughout all the fenced Cities of Judah, City by City, with the like solemn Charge, 2 Chron. 19. 5, 6, 7. He said to the Judges, Take heed what you do, for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment; wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of Gifts.

In the words of the Text, Jethro manifests both his Wisdom, and his Piety, in directing not only to a suitable number of Officers; but to those qualifications which were necessary for the discharge of their duty, in their several Stations.

Jethro mentions four qualifications; Able men, such as fear God, men of Truth, hating Covetousness: Moses mentions three more, Wise men, and Understanding, and known among your Tribes, Deut. 1. 13. Under these seven, all other good Qualities and Vertues being comprehended; I shall briefly explain, and distinguish them.

1. *Wise men*, men of Sagacity, of an acumen or sharpness of understanding, easily, and speedily to penetrate into the nature and qualities of things; Men of large Capacities; in a degree answering the Character of Solomon; to whom God gave largeness of heart, even as the Sand on the Sea shore, 1 King. 4. 29. Men who have right Ideas, notions and conceptions, and that in great abundance; Men that can discern the true sense of the Law; and distinguish between things that differ: between Plea and Plea; and not be imposed on by the Sophistry of those who would pervert Justice and Judgment, for filthy Lucre's sake.

2. *Men of Understanding*, *h. e.* of prudence and discretion; for wisdom dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions, Prov. 8. 12 Men that know how

to

to dispose things into a due method and order, in the proper time and season ; that matters may appear in a clear light, and that Justice may not be deferred, or delayed ; delays often proving more pernicious than a wrong Judgment.

3. *Men known among your tribes ;* not obscure men, who hide their Talents in a Napkin ; but who have appeared to be of a Publick Spirit, and have given proof of their ability, and fidelity ; Men of experience, and who deserve a good repute among their Neighbours ; as Persons fit for Publick Service.

4. *Able men ;* strong men, men of Fortitude, Courage and Resolution, that will not be diverted from their duty by frowns, nor smiles ; Men that have an antipathy against Flatterers, and Flattery ; Men that will dare to do Justice, though there are difficulties and dangers in the way.

5. *Fearing God ;* not *Atheists*, nor *Deists*, but who know and own the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent ; Men who have a principle of holy Fear in their Hearts ; consider themselves as placed in their Stations by Divine Providence, to act therein for God, to whom they are accountable ; Men that dare do nothing contrary to the Mind of God, because they fear him : that dare do all that God Commands, because they fear him, relying on his protection for their defence and security.

6. *Men of Truth ;* or *True Men* : not Men of a double Heart, nor double Tongue ; not *Hypocrites*, lest the People be ensnared, Job 34. 30. Men that love Truth, speak Truth, and will plead for Truth ; Men of Faith, whose words and promises may be relied on ; Men who will keep Faith with the Publick ; and be very careful to maintain, and preserve the *Publick Faith*.

7. *Men bating Covetousness ;* as an Evil most destructive to Human Society : No Man's Life, Estate or Interest is secure, where *Covetousness* reigns. *Naboth* found it so ; because he would not part with his Father's Inheritance, to satisfy the covetous desire of *Ahab*, a method was

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found to destroy his Life, that his Vineyard might be possessed by that *Ahab*, who tho' a King, made himself a Slave, *Selling himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord*, 1 Kin. 21. 20. Therefore in chusing Publick Officers, be sure to avoid *Covetous Men*; let them be Men *Hating Covetousness*.

The DOCTRINE to be insisted on, is only this :

DOCTRINE

In Chusing Persons for Publick Offices, and Employments, there ought to be special Care that they are Men, Hating Covetousness.

For the clearing and proving of this DOCTRINE, I shall insist on two Propositions.

PROP. I. *In Chusing of Persons for Publick Offices, and Employments, respect ought to be had to their Qualifications for such Offices and Employments.*

This is so evident to the light of Nature, that no rational Man will chuse a *Servant*, or a *Slave* that is not fit for the Work he designs him.

Here Consider,

1. *Choice is a free, deliberate and distinguishing act of the Mind.* In this case, it is supposed that divers Persons stand as *Candidates* for such an Office or Employment. Every Elector hath a determining Vote, as far as it respects himself, which of the two is best qualified for such a Station, and by his Choice testifyeth a peculiar respect to the Person he thinks most worthy.

2. *As there are different Offices and Employments, so there are different Gifts which adapt, or fit for such Offices; and different measures and degrees of those Gifts.* The Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift comes, doth distribute common Gifts for the good and benefit of Human Society, as well as *Spiritual Gifts*, for the benefit of the Church; distributing to every one severally as he will; all are adapted to some use or service:

service: The greatest Prince cannot say to the meanest *Peasant*, I have no need of thee; for *the King himself* is served by the field, Eccles. 5. 9. not only by the produce of the Field, but by the labour of the Husbandman that worketh in the Field. Now Choice ought to have respect to *Divine Providence*; considering who is it that the Supreme Governour of the World doth indigitate, or point me to, as fitted for such a Station, by the qualifications he hath bestowed upon him? Election of Officers ought to be attended unto with seriousness, looking up to God for direction, his Glory is concerned in their management; the judgment is God's; and they ought to act in his name and fear, for his Glory.

3. To have a liberty for Choice, and not to respect qualifications, is to trifle in a matter of greatest importance: It is to slight a privilege, which some *Heathens* would sooner part with their Lives, than their Children should be deprived of: It is to imitate the Sin and Folly of *Esau*, who for a morsel of meat sold his birth-right. Oh! how often do Men suffer themselves to be imposed on by those who seek their own Interest, by their neglect or credulity; little Emissaries are often employed, by false representations to divert from the Choice of the most Useful and Vertuous, and to engage a Party to serve the *Covetous*. Oh! how often have flourishing Cities and Countries been lost, ruined and spoiled of all their Glory, by *ungrateful* and *perfidious Hypocrites*, who were Chosen to serve the Publick Interest. It is therefore of the last importance, in chusing Persons to Publick Offices, to have respect to their *Qualifications*, That they be wise, understanding, known among the tribes, able men, fearing God, men of Truth, Hating Covetousness. Which leads to the Second Proposition.

PROP. H. In Chusing Persons to be Publick Officers, there ought to be special care that they be men hating Covetousness. The holy Apostle *Paul* in giving the qualifications for Bishops and Deacons, doth in a very particular

cular manner warn against the Covetous. *A Bishop must be blameless, &c. not greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous; likewise the Deacons must be grave, &c. not greedy of filthy lucre.* 1 Tim. 3. 3, 8. Tit. 1. 7. not given to filthy lucre. As Covetous Bishops and Deacons are a pest to the Church, so are Covetous Officers to the State.

In clearing this Proposition, I shall answer three Questions.

Quest. 1. *What is Covetousness?*

Quest. 2. *Who may be said to be Men hating Covetousness?*

Quest. 3. *Why ought there to be special care that Persons chosen to publick Offices, should be Men hating Covetousness?*

Quest. 1. *What is Covetousness?*

I intend only to explain the nature of the evil, in general; and not to discourse of the various ways & methods wherein this Sin doth appear. *

A. 1. *Covetousness is sometimes used as a term that comprehends all irregular and inordinate inclinations, and motions of the Soul towards forbidden Objects; the first motions of depraved nature towards sin; the first Issues of Indwelling sin, are termed Coveting, or Lusting.* Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known lust, or concupiscence, except the law had said, thou shalt not Covet; but sin taking occasion by the Commandment, wrought in me all manner of Concupiscence. Thus every man is tempted when he is drawn aside of his own lust, and enticed; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Jam. 1. 14, 15. *Thus, every imagination of the thoughts of mans heart, are only evil continually.* Gen. 6. 5. *And the employment of the Unregenerate is to fulfil the wills or desires of the flesh, and of the mind: All their labour and toil, their risques & hazards, are only to this end; to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof,* Rom. 13. 14.

A. 2. *Covetousness is commonly taken in a more limited or restrained sense, for a peculiar sort or kind of lust, distinguished from other lusts by a particular Object. The holy Apostle distinguish-*

distinguisheth the several sorts of lusts that are in the world, into three heads. *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.* Covetousness is a lust of the eyes, having Riches for the Object; The holy Apostle saith, *The love of money is the root of all evil.* Covetousness is the first expression of that love, which is predominant in them that will be rich.

Covetousness is a distemper of the Soul, which manifests it self in a constant, greedy, insatiable desire after Riches, and employeth the whole man in various methods to gratifie that desire. More particularly,

1. It is a distemper of the Soul seeking after Riches; a Covetous man is one that will be rich, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Riches, Mammon, is their chiefest good, and last end, their Idol, and they are termed Idolaters, Eph. 5. 5. I term it a distemper of the Soul, on a double account. (1.) To shew that it is seated in, and proceeds from a Soul that hath lost its Original Rectitude. It proceeds from the heart of man as depraved with Original Sin, Mat. 7. 22. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, &c Covetousness.* Man being made after the Image of God, and for the enjoyment of God as his chiefest good, and last end; while he remained in his Integrity, there was a blessed calm and serenity in his mind; a Harmony; all his motions were regular, he sought his happiness in the way God had appointed, improving all the Creatures to lead him unto his rest in God. But having lost that happiness, he is a restless Creature, seeking it where he can, under the conduct of an erroneous, and vain mind, preferring meer trifles before the most substantial good; some seek a happiness in sensual pleasures, running into excess and riot; others seeking after Honours, and Preferments: But the Covetous man (who esteemeth himself the wisest of the three) saith, *money answers all things*; if I can but get enough of that, I can purchase Honours and Pleasures; therefore laying aside all other designs, but what are subservient to his main end, he saith, *he will be rich.* (2.) Covetousness is termed a distemper, to distinguish it from a lawful, limited desire after a competent portion of the

the good things of this life, for the support of our selves, and those under our Charge, according to our several Stations. *Our Heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things*; and requires us in the diligent use of proper means, to manifest our dependance on him for such a competency; hence we are directed to pray for *our daily bread*; that God would feed us with food convenient for us; that which is a competency for a single person, is not for a Family; and that which is a competency for an *Husbandman*, is not for a Prince: That God who hath ordained *Publick Offices*, Sacred and Civil, and calleth Persons whom he qualifyeth for such Stations, therein to abide with him, attending on the duty of their Callings; alloweth them a *suitable Support*. There is an *accursed Levelling Spirit* in the World, which I cannot testifie against with a *sufficient indignation*; It will *starve Religion and Learning out of a Land*; those of this temper would hardly allow so much to *Civil or Ecclesiastical Officers*, as to the *meanest Artificer, or Day-Labourer*. This is contrary to distributive Justice, and the Rule thereof. The holy Apostle, who saith, *Rulers are the Ministers of God for good: i. e. to those under their Government*: requires, for *this cause to pay tribute also, for they are Gods Ministers*, attending continually upon *this very thing*; *Render therefore to all their dues; Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom is due, Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour*. And due it is, on the same account the People said to David, *Thou art worth Ten Thousand of us*, 2 Sam. 18. 3. So in proportion, the Service which Righteous, Wise and Faithful Officers do for the Publick, is *exceedingly more* than what *many Labourers* can do by their Industry. Thus an *ingenious man* often by a single proposal, doth save more to the Publick Treasury; or direct to a method for gaining more than a *Labouring man* can procure by his Industry in many years; the Use and Service of such Men is beyond what the *Vulgar* can discern: If their Service then be more in proportion, so ought their *Support*

port to be ; but *Covetousness* is a distemper that will not allow *Tribute*, to whom *Tribute* is due.

2. *Covetousness* is a continual, greedy and insatiable desire after *Riches*. (1.) It is a constant, continual desire, they covet all the day long : these are of the daughters of the *Horseleech*, crying, *Give, give* : These *Covetous* desires are as the pulse of their Souls, never ceasing so long as life lasts : *Give, give*, is their constant Tone. The holy Prophet describing the *Covetous Rulers of Israel*, saith, *Hos. 4. 18. Her Rulers with shame love Give ye. Or her Shields love Give ye, which is a shame ; k. e. Her Rulers*, who should be as *Shields*, and called *Shields*, *Psal. 47. 8. Whose business it is to protect and defend those who are under their Rule*, from the dangers to which they are exposed ; these love *GIVE ye* ; When the *Oppressed, Distressed, and Exposed*, do with all humility represent their difficulties and dangers, with importunate desires of defence ; the answer is, *GIVE ye* : I shall be deaf to all your *Petitions*, unless you answer this first, *GIVE, GIVE* : I must have a *Gratification* ; this is their constant cry. (2.) It is a greedy desire after *Wealth* ; they are greedy of filthy lucre : This denotes the eagerness and vehemence of the desire. *Covetousness* is that in *Morals*, which *Physicians* in *Naturals*, term a *Canine Appetite* ; they eat with greediness like *Dogs*. Thus the holy Prophet describes the *Watchmen of Israel* : *Watchmen* were either *Ecclesiastical*, or *Civil Rulers* ; of such he saith, *Isai. 56. 10. Her Watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber ; yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are Shepherds that cannot understand, they all look to their own ways, every one to his gain from his quarter. Come ye say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundantly. Or, we read their greedy appetite described, Zeph. 3. 3. Her Princes within her, are roaring Lions ; her Judges are sucking wolves, they gnaw not the bones till the morning.*

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They are so greedy, they leave nothing to be eaten on the morrow, they devour all presently: yet some of them are so considerate, *they tear in pieces for their Whelps*; the small morsels they rend & tear from the poor and needy, must satisfy the Lions Whelps, they strangle for their Lionesses; their Queens and their Concubines must have whole Carcases, the Plunder of Cities and Towns to prey upon; they fill their Dens with ravin, their Stately Palaces are furnished and adorned, their Magazines stored with the Spoils of Kingdoms. (3.) *Covetousness is an insatiable desire after Riches, they never say they have enough.* It was observed of old, that the love of Money increaseth with the Enjoyment, and the Scripture confirms it; for it is written, Eccl. 5. 10. *He that loveth silver, sh^{al} not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase.* It is part of the Curse of God on Man for his Apostacy: It is just, that those who forsake their own mercy, should be left to observe, and pursue after *Lying Vanities*, Jonah 2. 8. It is just, that those who forsake the fountain of living waters, should be left to the toyl and expence of *leaving out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* Sometimes Persons do project to fill the desires of the Covetous at once; hoping thereby to have some rest from their demands, that they will cease from their old cry, *Give, give*; but alas! they may as well think to quench the Fire with Oyl; they do but put them into a capacity to do them the more mischief. At first with more modesty they say, *Give ye*, but in a little time they say, *you sh^{al} Give*; they lay out what you give, to purchase the Opportunity, and to prepare, and shape the Tools to force open your locked Treasures. *They enlarge their desire as Hell and as Death, they cannot be satisfied*, Hab. 2. 5. never, never say, it is enough. (4.) *This greedy and insatiable desire issues in a sullen discontent if they are disappointed.* They wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they are not satisfied, Psal. 59. 15. They are like that Ahab, that covetous Ahab, who went to his house heavy and displeased, lying down

on his bed, turning away his face, and would eat no Bread, because Naboth denied him his Vineyard, 1 Kings 21. 4. Or, they are like those false Prophets mentioned, Mic. 3. 5. If any put not into their mouths, they ever prepare war against them. They are full of Cursing, and bitterness; and will employ all their little Emissaries to defame, hurt and destroy those who obstruct their unjust gain: if they once get them into their Clutches, they will deal with them like those Pyrates mentioned, Prov. 1. 12. Swallow them up alive like the Grave, and whole, as those that go down to the Pit.

3. Covetousness employeth the whole man, and all his interests, to obtain their desires. The Golden Ball is before them, they will stretch forth, prets forward, run swiftly, and expose themselves to utmost perils, to obtain it. (1.) It employeth their minds: Covetous men have their hearts exercised with covetous practices, 2 Pet. 2. 14. They are intent on getting gain; they have many subtil artifices and devices to manage; sometimes they are contriving, to remove obstructions; sometimes to prevent discovery, that they may act with secrecy, that they may not be mistrusted; sometimes in supplanting their Rivals; sometimes in finding out, and shaping Tools to be used in their Service; and when all things are ready, to know the best methods, and fittest seasons for accomplishment. They spend many waking Hours in imagining mischief upon their beds. As the abundance of the Rich will not suffer them to sleep; so the hungry, greedy appetite of the Covetous, (gnawing with anxious cares) will not permit them to sleep; they must resolve these Questions: *What shall I eat? What shall I drink? Wherewith shall I be clothed?* Or, *how shall I increase my Treasures?* before they can give sleep to their eyes, or slumber to their eyelids. Thus are their minds employed. (2.) Their busy minds call them up to action. They must rise up early, and set up late, and eat the bread of sorrows; bereaving themselves of the comforts of Life, that they may per-

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form their enterprize. The holy Prophet thus describes their industry, *That they may do evil with both Hands earnestly, the Prince asketh, and the Judge asketh for a Reward, and the Great Man he uttereth his mischievous device*; and so they wrap it up, or twist it together; taking as much pains as those who twist Cables of the largest Dimensions; they will spare no pains to effect their purposes. (3.) *Covetousness not only employ their Persons, but their Credit, their Friends and their Purfes, to get more gain.* They mistake, who think Covetous Persons are always niggardly: They will make very expensive Feasts, when they know how to make others pay the Reckoning. They employ their Children, their Servants, their Neighbours, their Tenants, their Friends, with all others who come under their Influence, to serve in several Stations, and by various Methods: Some Tools they shape by flattery and fawning; some by frowns and threats; some must serve them by admiring and praising them; some by their Pens, and some by their Purfes; and to them Gain is sweet, out of whatever it be extracted.

Quest. 2. *Who may be termed Men eating Covetousness?*

Ans. 1. *Those who studying the Holy Scriptures, have the same thoughts and resentment of this Sin, and of those who are under the dominion of it, the Scripture doth require.* It is the advice of the Blessed Jesus; *Take heed and beware of Covetousness*: And all his true Disciples observe that caution. Covetous Men are sometimes by their Flatterers, termed *thrifty, frugal, sparing, good Husbands*; they are Men of *fine parts, and great abilities*, only a little too selfish; too much set upon the World: But what saith the Scripture? It saith, Eph. 3. *3. Covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh Saints*; q. d. Covetousness is an evil so hateful to God, so directly opposite to the whole tenour of the Gospel, to the terms, the precepts; and to the blessed pattern and example of the Holy Jesus; that you

you ought to abstain from the very appearance of it ; that there may not, from the least degree of it in you, be any occasion to mention it ; and never speak of it without abhorrence. But consider, further, (1.) When the Holy Scriptures give the Characters of those who are excluded from the Kingdom of Heaven, the Covetous are numbred among them. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ; be not deceived, — nor thieves, nor Covetous : No whoremonger, nor Covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God,* Eph. 5. 5. (2.) Covetous men are numbred among those scandalous Sinners who are not meet for Christian Communion, Society, or Converse ; but to be shunned as if infected with the Plague. *If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or Covetous, &c. with such an one no not to eat.* (3) When the holy Apostle mentions (with tears) the Enemies of the Cross of Christ, the Covetous are among them : *Who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things,* Phil. 3. 18, 19. (4) When the Evils are mentioned that shall abound in the latter days, and render the times perilous, the Covetous are in the front : *Men shall be lovers of themselves, Covetous.* (5.) Yea, they are numbred with those who are given up to a Reprobate mind ; as men filling up the measure of their Sins, whose judgment now of a long time li. geth not, and their damnation slum- breth not : Men the nearest to Hell of any on this side of it, being fill'd with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, Covetousness, Rom. 1. 29. Those then I term Men *Hating Covetousness*, who upon all suitable occasions, do testify their abhorrence of this evil, as hateful to God, destructive to the Interest of Christianity, and pernicious to Human Society : *These will not have mens Persons in admiration because of advantage :* But beholding their face in the glass of the Word ; look on them as the most deformed Monsters pretending to Christianity.

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2. By men *hating Covetousness*, I intend those who are of a free, generous, noble, Princely Spirit, resembling the Children of a King, yea, the *King of Kings*; those Heaven-born Souls, who bear the Image of their Heavenly Father, *who makes his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth Rain on the just, and on the unjust*, Mat. 4. 45. Men that are Good, that *devise good, and do good*. Men known in the Gates to be Men of a Publick Spirit; Men that scorn to *Lackquy* after the sordid Humours of the Covetous, though *cloathed with Purple*, and *riding in Chariots*. Men who love their Country, value their Priviledges above Gold. Men who deserve *Mordecai's Character*, *accepted of the multitude of his Brethren, seeking the wealth of his People, and speaking peace to all his seed*, Esth. 10. 3.

Quest. 3. *Why ought there to be so much care to Chuse Men hating Covetousness, for Publick Officers?*

Ans. 1. *Covetous Men will do no good to the Publick*. b. c. they have no real, direct intentions to serve the *Publick Interest*: They often by accident, and by serving their own Interest, do some good; but this is not their design. You may as well expect the Stream will rise above the Fountain, as think that Covetous Men will act above the principle of *self love*; this is the first spring of action, and this their center: Here their thoughts, designs, cares and endeavours terminate. *I will be Rich*.

Ans. 2. *Covetous men will hinder others from doing good*; they hate those who are of a Publick Spirit: they know their proposals will interfere with their private interest; therefore they will what they can, blast their reputation, find fault with their Schemes for the Publick Service; they will to the utmost of their power, by themselves and Agents, stop, clog, hinder, obstruct; and if possible, subvert and overthrow whatever may thwart their private Interest.

Ans. 3. *Covetous men will do much hurt to the Publick*. For, (1) Their predominant principle influenceth them

them thereto; for *the love of money is the root of all evil*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. Many foolish and hurtful lusts spring from this root, such as *Lying, Fraud, Cheating, Bribery, Usury, &c.* Besides, it inclines to all other sins that may subserve this great design of getting money. What will a *Covetous man* stick at to accomplish his design? They are Time-servers, and Men-pleasers, and will turn with every wind: They often prostitute themselves to the greatest abominations in compliance with the lusts of men, in order to obtain their end. It will make *Princes* the companion of *Thieves*. Isa. 1. 23. (2) There is nothing will obstruct, or hinder them, they will break all bonds, both Sacred and Civil, rather than be restrained from getting Money. Indeed they will seem to be Religious, it may be boast of their Conversion to God, and their assurance of an Heavenly Inheritance; and appear devout in the Temple, grave and sober in their deportment: When there are *seven abominations in their hearts*, Prov. 26. 25. *They lie unto God with their lips, they flatter him with their tongue, they come before him with images of Jealousie in their hearts; Mammon is the God they worship, and their hearts go after their Covetousness; and therefore depart from the faith, and turn aside from the Holy Commandment,* when in pursuit after Riches and Honour No Oaths will hold them, they will swear to do Justice, and yet take a Gift to pervert Judgment. They will swear Allegiance to their Prince, and correspond with their Enemies. Oh! how many Cities, and Strong Holds have been delivered up! how many Free-born Subjects have been bought and sold like Slaves, to satisfy the greedy appetite of the *Covetous*. No principles of Honour will oblige them, they will not spare their nearest Relations, they will be *cruel to their own flesh*; they will *speak you fair, and flatter with their lips, when war is in their hearts*: they will pretend to kiss, when they design to *smite under the fifth rib*, 1 Sam. 20. 10. There can be no true friendship

ship with a Covetous man, he will betray his most intimate Friend for a little Money. Covetous men will do much hurt to the Publick, (1.) By their *Example*. Covetousness is a very spreading Evil. When Men see others thrive, prosper, succeed in the World, grow rich and abound, they enquire into their Methods, hoping for the like Success; and so they *teach the wicked ones their ways*, Jer. 2. 33. (2.) By their *Influence*; according to the extent thereof. Covetous men will make a prey of the careless, foolish and ignorant; but will make use of the crafty, as tools to serve their design; they therefore enquire after such as are *subtil*, but *indigent*; these must be disposed into several Under-Offices, in divers Stations: Now these poor Creatures are often under cruel Bondage; they have their Debts to pay, their Families to maintain, and a proportion to pay unto their Employers. What course must they take? To complain of their *hard Terms*, is to lose their *Livelihood*; to *disclose the Intreague*, is the way to ruin; the only way is to *grind the faces of the Poor*, to use artifices to filch from the Publick, and by such Methods, *Poverty comes on a People like an armed Man*: They hardly know whence the mischief doth arise; only they find themselves in a deep *Consumption*, past cure. So pernicious, hurtful and destructive are *Covetous men* to the Publick Interest.

Inasmuch as my design in treating on this Subject, was in a peculiar manner, for the Service of this Town: I shall in the APPLICATION humbly offer my Advice in three Particulars.

1. *Let us be very thankful for the Priviledges we Enjoy.*
2. *Let us highly prize and value them.*
3. *Manifest that value, by chusing Men hating Covetousness, to the several Offices at your dispose.*

Advice 1. Let this Town be very thankful for the Mercies and Priviledges it doth yet enjoy, through the
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favour of our Gracious God. When we consider the many provoking Evils that have been, and still are in it. We must acknowledge, *That it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.* This Town is a monument of the patience, forbearance and long-suffering of God : it had been consumed and laid in Ashes, had not the tender mercies of God prevented ; *Many a time may we now say, had not God been on our side, the Enemy would have swallowed us up quick ; the proud waters had gone over our Soul ; but blessed be God, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth : Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers, the snare is broken, and we are escaped.* Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and earth, Psal. 124. Let us consider, very many Towns, Cities and Strong Holds (the Masterpieces of Art) have been shattered, beaten down, consumed by fire, plundered and ravaged, during the long War ; and yet this Town preserved ; no Galley with Oars, nor Gallant Ship hath shot a Bullet, nor Bomb against it ; this is the doing of the Lord, and it ought to be marvellous in our eyes ; we ought to call upon our Souls, and all within us to sing praises to God, sing praises, for he hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad, and *Blessed be his glorious name.* But we are not only preserved ; we enjoy many mercies, we are daily loaden with benefits, we have a great measure of health, peace and plenty, while others are consumed by the Sword, Famine, and Pestilence ; the Lord *dealeth bountifully with us.* To all this, (1.) We enjoy our *Sacred Privileges* ; we have liberty to Worship God on his Holy Day, in the ways of his own Appointment, and none make us afraid. We have *faithful Ministers*, instructing us in the great Mysteries of the Gospel, in the things that concern our peace ; *Watchmen upon our Walls*, to warn us of our danger, and calling us to Repentance and Reformation : *Watchmen that Pray* for our Welfare, saying as Psal. 122. 7. *Peace be within thy walls, prosperity within thy palaces ; for my brethren and*

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companions sake, I will now say, peace be within thee ; because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good. Let us consider, the many famous Churches, which have been broken and dispersed, there is *none to break the Bread of Life to them, there is a Famine, not of Bread, but of hearing the Word of the Lord ; they wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and cannot find it,* Amos 8. There are many of the precious Sons of Zion murdered in the most barbarous manner ? many in Dungeons and Gallies ; and many dispersed into the several Quarters of the Earth, and their Children brought up in Popish Idolatry ; and we have a full enjoyment of precious [advantages, though so barren and unfruitful under them : It is from rich and glorious Grace ; let us remember whence we are fallen, repent and do our first works. We have large *Civil Liberties*. It is a great favour, that there are so many of the Children of the Town (as well as others) who seek the good thereof, and that are well-qualified for *Publick Service* in divers Stations ; and that the Town hath liberty to Chuse such into Office. Let us consider many there are who once had very great Priviledges of this sort ; but they have been wrested out of their hands by force, or stolen from them by cunning artifices ; they are now but Vassals, daily exposed as a prey to hungry, greedy, savage *Officers*, who oppress them in all their Interests ; all Liberty and Property is taken away ; or at least is so precious, that they can hardly say a Foot of Land, or any of their Goods are their own. But blessed be the Lord our God, who hath freed us from such *Oppressors*. And let us not forget to be thankful for the QUEEN's most Excellent Majesty, daily Praying for Her long Life and Prosperity, under whose Influence we Enjoy such precious advantages.

Adv. 2. *Let us prize and value our Priviledges, and not at a low rate, but as a rich Inheritance.* As the Constitution

tion of the English Government, is justly esteemed the most excellent in the Earth; the Priviledges of *English* men the greatest; so it hath cost much Blood & Treasure to secure them from Generation to Generation. The Glorious God hath marvellously preserved them; and shall we disregard them? What home-born Slaves shall we deserve to be, if we do not value them. They ought to be treated with Indignation, who would perswade poor People they are little worth: they intend to make their market of them, and are like those crafty Traders mentioned, Prov. 20. 14. *It is naught, it is naught saith the Buyer, but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth*; and so will these triumph over those whom they impose upon.

Adv. 3. *Manifest your value for your Priviledges, by Chusing men hating Covetousness into all such Publick Offices and Stations as are at your dispose.* Consider, (1) *There is no security for any Priviledge or Trust committed to a Covetous man*: They are usually timorous and fearful, they are Flatterers and Time-servers; and their greediness after Riches will influence them to accept a good proffer when presented by them that know how to make the advantage. It is impossible to conceive the mischiefs done by the Covetous. How many Cities, Towns, and Countries have been bought and sold by the Covetous. Whence had the French their Glory? but by Pensioners in the several Neighbouring Countries, who exposed Priviledges to Sale, whereby he had the opportunity to seize the Effects? And is not this one great end of this long and expensive War, (which hath cost many millions of treasure; and hundreds of thousand Lives) to make him refund which he purchased so clandestinely? (2) *Men hating Covetousness will do much Service*: I intend not this Qualification, exclusive of others, but in conjunction; even able Men, Men fearing God, Men of truth, hating Covetousness; this Generous principle, will dispose them to employ all their Talents and Interests to Serve the Publick. They will have a watch-

ful eye over the Covetous, they know their narrow selfish souls are always contriving by subtil artifices to gull the Publick; and therefore will endeavour to prevent them. Whereas the Publick Good lying near the hearts of these, they will be always projecting and contriving something to promote it, *viz.* To reform the Manners of the Town; To prevent Nuisances, and Inconveniencies; to strengthen and defend it; to regulate, and increase the Trade of it; to relieve and supply the Poor; and to punish the disorderly, as far as their power extends. And besides all this, will be examples of a ready, chearful Contribution of their proportion to the Publick Charge. (3) *Men hating Covetousness will not only do most Service for the Publick, but with least Expence.* Here we may observe,

1. There are indeed *divers Offices in the Town*, which *Qualified Men* ought to attend out of pure regard to the Publick Good; as Members of the Body Politick; without expecting a Salary. Men hating Covetousness will serve the Town in such Capacities, readily, chearfully and impartially; and ought to be treated with Respect, loved and valued for their Fidelity. It is lamentable to consider what *ill Usage* such have sometimes met with.

2. There are other *Officers in the Town*, who justly expect a *Support* suitable to their Stations and Work. I advise to Chuse Men hating Covetousness into such Stations and Employments: On this account, *That they will do most Good, with least Charge*: Which will appear if we consider,

(1.) That those who Chuse Persons into Publick Offices, whether *Ecclesiastical* or *Civil*, ought to provide for their Subsistence to such a degree, that they may *diligently and chearfully attend on that Service to which they call them*. This is their due by the Laws of God and Man; to deny or with-hold it, is to contradict one of the first dictates of the Law of Nature; therefore such may & ought to expect it, and depend upon it.

(2.) Men

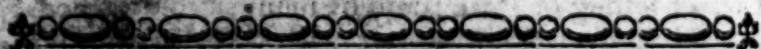
(2.) Men hating Covetousness will be content with a Competency: There is a bound and limit to their desires in this respect: As they pray, that God would feed them with Food convenient, so they expect no more from Man, but what is suitable to their Station and Circumstance. But here I must observe, that for this their temper, they are often horribly abused and neglected; for which God will judge.

(3.) But then consider, If covetous, greedy Men be put into such Stations, what will follow? They will thus argue, There is a suitable Supply for the Support of me and mine, due to me by all Laws Divine and Human: If I provide not for my own, especially for those of my own House, I deny the faith, h. e. the Christian Faith, and am worse than an Infidel. I have no other way to subsist while I live, nor Leave to mine when I die. These People deny me what is just and equal: it is not for want, they have enough, they have Plenty: I see it in their costly & extravagant Garbs, their stately Fabricks, their rich Furniture; in their Shops, Ships, in their Fields & Barns: Therefore having an opportunity in my hand, I will improve it, and employ all the Methods and Agents I can, to get that which they unjustly detain from me. And thus often-times Covetous men squeeze more Treasure from them, than would support many others; and they have no remedy; but may set down bewailing their folly, in withholding more than was meet. I beseech you to consider what mischief Covetous men may do in their several Offices and Stations; some by false Entries, defacing, or altering of Records; by wasting of Treasure; by unjust Rates, and cruel Exactions, by denying to Vote, or selling of Votes; and by innumerable methods, and subtil devices; and you will perceive they are dangerous men, and to be avoided; they are often (as we term them) sober men, and nothing to be objected, save only in the matter of Covetousness; they will pretend to save Charges, but are of all men most profuse and lavish, will lose opportunities for doing

doing of Service, and part with rich advantages for the Publick, rather than stay a few hours from their own Interest.

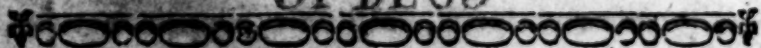
I Conclude with one Consideration more, which would afford matter for a long Discourse: Viz. To shew what mischief Covetous men do in Churches. Where Church-Officers are greedy of filthy lucre, and the Body of the Community Levened with the same evil; there is nothing secure where Covetousness reigns. If Church-Rulers are Covetous, they will fawn, flatter, and comply with the lusts of men; having their persons in admiration for an advantage, &c. If the People are Covetous, they will expose the Officers to innumerable difficulties and temptations; divert them from their Duty, or so clog them; that as dispirited and discouraged men will do little or no Service. It is so contrary to the Gospel, that those who are under the power of it, are excluded from the Priviledges of it. *If any man loves the World, the love of the Father is not in him:* Such Professors are Spots and Blemishes; they grieve the Holy Spirit of God, quench his motions, and cause him to depart from that People; and provoke the Holy One to give them up to strong delusions.

Having been thus helped to leave a plain Testimony against Covetousness; through Grace I will abide thereby; leaving it to the Blessing of God; and recommend the Advice of our Lord Jesus, Luke. 12. 15. *Take heed, and beware of Covetousness.*



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